

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Monday, 30 May 2022 11:23:45 PM

Your details

Title Ms

First name Lydia

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Email

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Submission details

I am making this submission as A business owner

Submission type I am making a personal submission

Organisation making the submission (if applicable) Communities Hub Art Space Inc

Your position in the organisation (if applicable) Co-ordinator

Consent to make submission public I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

I am the co-ordinator of a community art gallery and have had our premises inundated in the original flood to 1.6metres, upstairs above a large restaurant. We have lost many pieces of furniture and equipment but are in the process of restoring the space for opening again in June. My own home, in the hinterland at Rosebank, was affected by water leaks and rushing flood water under and around the house and which has now led to mould occurring, which I am treating. My driveway has been virtually impassable for months now and we are getting help from an earth moving person to help restore it but we have had to wait for the consistent rain to ease before doing the job, which makes life challenging.

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

I have done research that has shown that engineers in the past have stated that an option for Lismore's flooding was to dig a large channel out to approximately 4 kms to the west of the town and divert the waters of Leycester Creek away from Lismore so that much of the flood waters do not funnel straight into the city. this would of course need to be examined by current hydrologists as to whether this would be problematic for other places further out in that direction but this should be looked at as something that may make a big difference. The fact that the drainage along the railway corridor as well as the vegetation, especially the growth of trees and bushes, have not been maintained over many years has seriously contributed to the build up of flooding. This has been attested to by many local farmers who have complained that John Holland, who was contracted at a cost of \$750,000 annually to maintain these assets, had not done so, thus contributing to greater flooding problems due to a lack of water flowing away

more easily through what should have been well maintained drains along the railway line. The current railway embankments can be improved to include large pipes to form culverts and allow flood waters to move through them more easily. A lack of access to communication with those who live further upstream and who can see that the weather and rainfall is heading towards a flood situation has been a problem. Having a specific social media page where rainfall and flooding information updates can be located is crucial.

1.2 Preparation and planning

A series of flood sirens, loud enough to be heard over torrential rain, should be installed in strategic parts of the town. Also, locals who decide to stay living in flood prone areas of Lismore should have an accessible ladder attached either to somewhere in the inside of the house leading up into the roof cavity, with an openable window installed to the outside world, or a ladder on the outside of the building leading to the roof. Some suggestions I have heard are attaching a bed to a large piece of thick styrofoam which floats well and can hold many precious items as the waters rise and the styrofoam rises with it. also, to cover firewood with shade cloth, pegged down securely with large pegs so that the wood does not float away and can be used after the flood subsides. Retaining the railway lines and embankments would allow for goods to be transported by rail when major roads are cut off to trucks and supermarkets have little on their shelves. This would help the greater sustainability and resilience of our region.

1.3 Response to floods

Our communities have risen to the challenges, even though at first they were told they should not be helping in their tinnies etc to save people from roofs etc. There was not sufficient SES support as I believe the funding had been cut so there were only a very small number of boats available to help. I believe there should be a central but local organisation who co-ordinates

all donations made by the public and also from the government, so that the most important requirements at any given moment are covered for all people affected by the floods. Many donations have been much appreciated of food and clothing etc which have been supplied at local recovery centres.

Housing is something required quickly so places where simple but secure and comfortable housing can be achieved such as has recently been created at Wollongbar are crucial.

1.5 Recovery from floods

More use of local feedback from those who have observed previous flood situations, to educate the bureaucracy, and the potential of refurbishing houses and businesses so that they can more easily withstand inundation is crucial as well as educating all community members as to preparing for taking certain important documents with them when evacuating. Making grants much more accessible and quicker to alleviate the suffering of those who have lost so much.

1.6 Any other matters

Our local railway line is being threatened by the Lismore Flood Mitigation Strategy which proposes to pull down the railway embankment near Lismore. However, this along with all the proposed options in the strategy would only lessen the flooding by 400mm or 10"! As 3 local railway companies are working towards bringing back rail services to our region this would be a massively backward step that would jeopardise this potential much needed transport option for the benefit of our whole region, especially with climate change looming its ugly head (through floods and other extreme weather events) and the build up of emissions and traffic congestion being major concerns for the future. The large number of elderly and disabled members of our community are often stranded at home as the big privately owned buses are not useable for them and do not provide adequate enough time tabling. Also, our youth cannot get around easily and the 2.4 million tourists that visit Byron Bay annually need

to be given a means of accessing other towns to support their local economies, however if the line is cut due to flood initiatives this will not be possible and will set our region back greatly.

Supporting documents or images
